

A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE SYRIANS IN GREATER NEW YORK

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Ralph A. Felton.

A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE SYRIANS IN GREATER NEW YORK

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Preface.

The basis of information for this thesis has been personal investigation. The writer spent three years in Syria as an instructor in the Syrian Protestant College at Beirut. The statements made in this paper concerning the economic, social, and religious life of the Syrians in their home country and their motive for emigration is based upon knowledge gained by this three years residence in their land. This residence in Syria also gave the writer a knowledge of the Arabic language with which he was able to get information from them in this investigation which he could not otherwise have secured. The statements made regarding the Syrian in his environment in Greater New York is based upon knowledge gained from a personal investiggtion of the three communities. The population which was estimated at 6000 (page 4) is based on the registration of the Syrian religious officers, viz. the Greek Orthodox, the Greek Catholic, and the Maronite priests and the clerk of the Protestant church. This includes the people of all ages. The statement regarding the increase in immigration (page 5) is based upon the Immigration report of the U.S. Government. The statement on page five regarding the diseases and their causes which take people back to Syria is the opinion of two Syrian doctors, one has been here seven years and the other twenty.

The statement regarding the amount of rent paid by the Syrians (page 11 and 12) is based upon the price paid by twelve families in each one of the colonies. The estimate was coroborated by a real estate firm in each colony. The statements that appear on pages 11-14 regarding th occupations of the Syrians are taken from a study made by Prof. Miller, in which he made a house to house canvass of the entire community in each district. He secured information regarding previous residence in the homeland and regarding their present occupation in this country. The canvassing blank which he used was furnished by the Federation of Churches of the City of New York. Prof. Miller's report,(now out of print) is called, "Our Syrian Population". The fact that his canvass was thorough and that he worked under the supervision of the Federation of Churches Committee makes us confident that his statements are trustworthy. His canvass was made in 1903. Not wishing to make a similar house to house canvass in which it is possible to only get a few facts such as occupation etc. but rather to study the <u>life of the community</u> as it shown in its organizations, clubs, newspapers, schools, recreation centers,etc. we have used his data, regarding occupations. The per cent of pupils given on page 15 as being in the public schools is the remainder after the enrollment in the religious schools were subtracted from the total number of children on the records of the church authorities. The word "member" used in the paragraph,"A study of the churches" means and individual born in the particular faith without any reference to his age or church connection.

This investigation was made to find out the conditions under which the Syrian lives, his attitude towards his new environment and the effect of this environment upon his economic, social, religious and moral life. Over a hundred families were visited by the author, but not only to find out the conditions in these particular familes, but to get their attitude towards the various institutions found in the Syrian communities. The offacers of all the clubs were interviewed, the public schools were visited where the children attend, and the daily newspapers were employed to get at the life of the people. Where a visit was made in a family from thirty minutes to two hours was spent there in order to completely remove suspicion so common amongst people who have lived under a despotic government. To find out the habits of the people in exploiting their new-comers, a habit very noticeable amongst other nationalities, a friend of the writer, a Syrian was induced to act and dress as a new immigrant in which manner he visited all the lodging houses and ticket agencies etc. He found ~~that~~ no instance of any attempt towards dishonesty or exploitation. Another method used for an entire day of visiting amongst the Syrian homes was the use of this Syrian friend as an interpreter, speaking to him only in English and pretending to know no Arabic. In these ways we believe that we were able to find out the exact condition, and attitudes found amongst these foreign people, who ordinarily are so difficult of approach by any foreigner.

A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE SYRIANS IN GREATER NEW YORK

Introduction.

Every American in Syria is confronted with the vast number of failures amongst Syrians who have spent a few years in America. Every steamer that brings back to the homeland Syrians who have "bin to Merica" brings with it a certain amount of embarassment for loyal Americans who meet these returned pilgrims. Just a few days before leaving Syria last July I received the news that two families of Syrians who had returned to their village in the Lebanon Mountains had actually driven out the priests from this village. Laziness and the returned Syrian are sworn friends. When you hear a Syrian throw back his shoulders and in a bravado manner say, "Sure fellows, I like whiskey" you generally ask him in what town in America he has been living. The week before I left I heard an old Alumna of the American School for Girls in Beirut tell her friends about her life here in America. In vivid terms she told them how she spent her week ends out at the seaside and what good times she had on Sundays. One of my friends was away over near the edge of the desert one day when a Syrian addressed him



thus: "Hello fellow, you from Merica?" "Yes, I'M a citizen, say who'd you vote for ? I voted for Parker, got a dollar for it too."

Unfriendly critics of Missions continually remind the American Missionary of the bad effects America has on the Syrian and then place the blame for the emigration on the Mission Schools which have put the idea of going to America into the minds of the young Syrians.

These facts led to the investigation which has resulted in this paper.

The purpose of this investigation is to show Whether America helps or hinders the Syrian Immigrant.

The principal problem encountered in this investigation was getting at the truth. The Syrian has lying down to a FINE ART. The lack of veracity in the Orient is famous. Add to this natural tendency the fact that for centuries the Syrians have lived under a tyrannical and despotic government where lying was generally the only resort for saving one's head and you can readily see to what dimensions this trait has grown and you can almost see a profound dignity in the eternal prevaricating of the Syrians.

Their answers are always framed to please regardless of the facts in the case. Traveling on the east side of the Jordan up near the Sea of Galilee, I once asked

a Syrian how many hours it was to Gadara. He looked me over and thought I appeared to be tired, as I surely was for I had ridden nearly forty miles already without lunch, so he said Gadara was near, only one hour away. I rode on an hour and saw no village. I asked another man. "Yes by Allah, your direction is right, but the village is two hours ahead of you." I rode two hours but saw no village. Thinking that I had missed it, for the country is mountainous, I asked a third resident. "By the Prophet, you ride three hours on ahead and you'll see the village", he said. In three hours we were in the village as he had said.

I hope you will not conclude that I have gotten the information for this paper with no better success than I did the distance to Gadara There is a way of approaching the truth, at least. For instance, in coming to a fork in the roads you should say, "Which one of these roads leads to Damascus?" He will probably tell you correctly because he can't tell which would please you the most. Then you must deny his statement, no matter what he says, and get off your horse and show great excitement, as though he was trying to get you on the wrong road and you were very angry about it. After throwing your hands in wild excitement for a while, if you are unable to get him to change his decision, you will undoubtedly find that you are on the right road.

Some of these erroneous answers are due to the fact that the person doesn't know, yet in my three years spent amongst Syrians I must search a long time to remember of ever hearing a Syrian say, "I don't know." I once asked an old man, how old he was. He said, "Perhaps fifty, perhaps a hundred, I don't know. God knows." These instances are few.

B. POPULATION

Statistical Data.

(a) Number of Syrians in Greater New York. As to the number of Syrians in Greater New York, no one knows exactly. The Syrians themselves estimate their number to be from ten to twelve thousand. They are given to exaggeration, especially concerning numbers if this amount increases your estimate of them. When I first went to Beirut, one of my students told me that his relatives composed half the population of the city. I found out later that his father was nothing but a boatman with but two wives and five children, with perhaps a hundred relatives. The population of the city is one-hundred and twenty thousand. I think that instead of ten thousand Syrians in New York, there are approximately six thousand. (b) The yearly increase from immigration is comparatively small now. There are less than three million people in all of Syria, and many of these go to other countries besides the Unites States.



The largest yearly increase which I have been able to learn about, was from July 1902 to June 1903, which was forty-five hundred and sixty-six. The change of Government in Turkey has tended greatly to decrease the immigration during the past three years.
(c) Practically the only causes which make people return to Syria are consumption, due to change of climate, or nervous troubles due to over-work, or more notably, the acquisition of a little money and an innate desire to get back to the homeland and spend the rest of their lives in luxury and ease.

C. PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENT

Statistical Data

(a) Brief description of the economic, social, and religious life of the Syrian in the home country.

By looking at the political economic, social and religious life of the Syrian in his home-land, we may be able to determine the cause of the immigration, and also to some extent determine whether America's influence on him is harmful or helpful. Syria has always been the birthplace of religions; the only Monotheistic religions have emanated from there. Outside of Tiberias, Hebron, Safed and Jerusalem, the three holy Jewish cities, there are few Jews in the land. So the population naturally is divided into two classes, Christian and Mohammedans. Since the days of Mohammed, the Christians have been in subjection to the star and crescent.

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Add to this political condition the fact that in 1903 there were twenty-four hundred and eighty-two Syrians in Greater New York, and twenty-four hundred and seventy-seven of these were Christians and five were non-Christians, and we easily infer that the religious and political situation has had much to do with the emigration. Until two years ago only Mohammedans were taken into the army as soldiers as precaution for a Holy War which might break out at any time. Instead of three years in the army, the Christians were compelled to pay fifty pounds sterling. Those who could not pay this amount were put in prison. This amount doesn't seem like such a large sum, but to the Syrians it was an enormous amount. Once in prison, there was no way of getting out except by bribery which method was generally used. Until the adoption of the new constitution in July of 1908, and soon after the deposition of Abdul Hamid the II, the Christians were remarkably down-trodden. A few incidents which came under my notice may illustrate the extent to which this was carried on. The Armenian Christians were once martyred in Constantinople by the thousands, but a short time afterwards when several street dogs were killed, the offending party was punished. The last act of the deposed Sultan was to incite a massacre which broke out on the 23rd of April 1909, in which twenty-five thousand Christians were shot down, hacked and burned.

When Dr. Howard Bliss was shipping some books

to Beirut the works of Shakespeare were confiscated because they spoke about conspiracies. A brother of one of my friends was entering the port at Beirut, and had a Myers Ancient History with him. This book contained a very scathing article against the Mohammedan rule. The fellow was put in a dark damp prison cell, where he soon took the pneumonia and died. A Scotch Missionary, at Safed was getting an X-ray machine for his hospital. It was confiscated in Haifa because it was supposed to be a dangerous gun. A friend of mine in Beirut, a Mr. Fryer, imported a new gasoline engine which was quickly confiscated because it had printed on a wheel shaft so many hundred revolutions per minute. They said, they wanted nothing revolutionary in the Empire. Five men met in Schweir, a little village in the Lebanon Mountains, to discuss some plans for establishing a reading and game room in the village for the young men. They were all taken to prison for secret conspiracies. Some men were transporting some goods on their camels. They were stopped and robbed of all the goods. When they went back to report to the owners, they were immediately imprisoned and the robbers were free. Three of my own students who became Christians were spit upon and would have been torn to pieces but for peculiar circumstances. This act precipitated a riot in the college where one-hundred Mohammedan students swore on the Koran that they would never again enter the chapel, etc. This led to mobs, riots, etc.

These incidents give a little idea of the way in which a Christian is treated in a non-Christian country, namely: "The land of the despicable Turk." It may be fortunate that the Syrian's conscience does not prick him keenly for not adhering to the truth. So I take it, that many Syrians are here because of the political troubles.

A party of us were once traveling in Syria when we were asked why we had come to Syria. Our evasive answer did'nt satisfy them. They said, "Are you buying camels?" When we denied this they said, "Then you must have committed some crime in America or else you are trying to get away from the "King of America" because of debt or military service." This statement, I think explains the reasons for all of the emigration from Syria to America. In Gidding's Descriptive and Historical Sociology, we read that the two causes of emigration are (1) Economic and (2) Love of excitement and novelty. I think this last mentioned cause does not enter into the Syrian problem. The Syrian naturally loves his home as no other race, with the possible exception of the inhabitants of Great Britain, and he is loathe to leave it for any novelty or excitement. I quote from the diary of a Syrian here in America. "My father received my first words with a flood of tears. Although I tried to comfort him he continued to sob and recall his son."...."I left my father a prey to his grief." ...."In Beirut I embarked on the S.S. Portugal. The mom-



ent of parting was painful to human nature, and my last words with my father and family were interrupted with burning tears. When the signal of departure had been given and we separated, we still watched one another in the distance and waved a last Farewell. Farewell family, dear land of Lebanon, farewell, green hills, mountains and beautiful valleys, farewell, lofty Mt. Sunin, crowned with perpetual snow, farewell, ancient cedars of Lebanon." ..... "I could not sleep, so much did my eyes desire a last view of my native land." Although the Syrian has such a love for his native land, yet he scatters over the earth as no other race with possibly one exception. Recently, I was calling on a Syrian family in South Brooklyn. She was a widow with four sons and one daughter. One of her sons is in Portland, Oregon; one in Dallas, Texas; one in New Orleans and one in South America. She has other near relatives in Montreal, Canada; in Damascus, Syria and in Jerusalem.

(b) Motive for emigration.

Syrian emigration began to America in 1876. Several men came over here to the Exposition in Philadelphia to exhibit the wares of the land. Their olive wood articles were coveted by many people. They sold out soon after the Exposition and went home to duplicate the orders many times. Soon they began to bring Syrian goods here to sell These people who came amassed immense fortunes for them, and in a short time every peasant in Syria thought of



America as being a Land of Golden Streets. I quote from the words of a Syrian who wrote back to his friends at home, "On the 15th of May, I beheld America for the first time. Upon nearing New York, all the passengers of our steamer rushed on deck to gaze upon the imposing city whose high buildings seemed to touch the clouds. The colossal proportions of these edifices made us think of a chain of ragged mountains outlined against the sky." "All hail, new land of the New World!"

D. PRESENT ENVIRONMENT

I. The Communities.

(a) The Manhattan Colony I shall divide into three communities: the Manhattan Community, the South Ferry Community, and the South Brooklyn Community. The Manhattan Community begins at the Battery and goes North three streets, Washington, Greenwich and West as far as Cedar Street. This comprises fourteen blocks. The South Ferry community is in Brooklyn. It begins where the ferry touches and extends up Atlantic Avenue four blocks, up Pacific Street three blocks, with a few scattering families on the adjoining streets. The South Brooklyn community extends up Third, Fourth and Fifth Avenues, between Forty-eighth and Seventy-second Streets. Of course this last community is quite scattered. In none of these communities is congestion noticeable. The HOUSING varies in the order of the community from Manhattan. Nearly every Syrian in Manhattan has but two rooms



for which the average rent is ten dollars per month. The front room is generally clean, the back room which is generally dark is not so clean. The hall-ways in the houses are always dark and dirty. The sanitary arrangements are deplorable. The large and front room in this community is clean, well kept, and inviting. Fourteen of these houses have been reported to the Sanitary Department of the Sanitary House Commission, but I can see no improvement as yet. The officers say theSyrians excel all other immigrants in the cleanliness in which they keep their houses. The rent in this quarter has raised 49% in the last seven years, and yet the rooms are the same old dirty holes. Several of the houses have missing airshafts. One-hundred and seventy-nine families have been found to have one dark room, thirty eight had two dark rooms. It has been estimated that the average residence of these people in the United States is five years and six months. According to a house-to-house canvass, made by Prof. Miller in 1906, it was found that the division of wage earners among the various occupations in this community is as follows.

Peddling	34.4%
Factory	28.7%
Store	18.5
Sewing (Kimonas at home)	12.9%
Clerks	3.9%
Professional	1.6%

In the last two or three years there has been a noticeable decrease in peddling. The reason given by the Syrian is that their wares are no longer novel.

The South Ferry Community.

This community started when there were no subways. The men who had lived in Manhattan sometime and had accumulated a little wealth wanted better quarters, so they went to this part of Brooklyn to live. They could go across on the ferry for one cent from seven until nine in the morning and later for two cents. This was a strong argument for the native Syrian, regardless of how wealthy he had become. They could take push carts across for one and a half cents, all of which things located this colony at the terminus of the ferry. The average living apartment here is five rooms and the average rent paid is $20.00 per month. This is an increase in rent of 66 2/3 % in the last seven years. These houses are noticeably clean. I have not yet found one place that could be questioned for its cleanliness. With the exception of peddlers and those employed in the fourteen Syrian stores in Brooklyn, the people all come across to Manhattan for their work daily. The store workers in this community was found to be 33.6% and the factory workers 21.8% while the peddling column falls down to 18.2%, and the professional column comes nearly to 6%. (Prof. Miller) These people

have been in the country longer and have gradually taken up with the American ways of work.

The South Brooklyn Community

This community is very vaguely outlined. It consists of people who have been a longer time in America. A very few are living in crowded conditions, that is with more than two persons to a room. These men generally own stores or factories. It has been estimated that 56.4% own stores or work in stores, while peddling has fallen down to 10%. 18.2% are employed in or own factories. (Prof. Miller). The average number of rooms per family here is five and the average rent is $22.00.

The houses are all clean and many are artistically furnished. In many of these houses pianos are found and there are several first class musicians among the young ladies. There is one music teacher here and one composer of music. Nearly all of the young ladies attend High School and a few go to higher schools. The young men generally stop at the eighth grade, unless they get a short business course.

II. A General Impression About the Three Colonies.

Nearly every Syrian who comes to New York for the first time settles in Manhattan. After a few years if he makes a failure here he goes back home. These are the people we see in Syria and the ones

that give one the bad impression of the moral influence of America upon the emigrant. If the Syrian succeeds, he moves to the South Ferry community where he gets himself better rooms and probably gets a store of his own or gets a position in a factory. If success is kind enough to visit him again he moves down to South Brooklyn, where he lives as well as the average apartment dweller on the upper West Side.

Outside of these three communities there are a few scattered families. There are four families living in the Bronx, a barber, druggist, grocer and interpreter. In Jersey City I have located ten families. These people live as well or better than their American neighbors. Two of the Jersey City families are supposed to be worth about $200,000 each.

E. THE EXPRESSION OF SYRIAN LIFE IN ITS NEW ENVIRONMENT

I. Economic.

Classes of industry of the entire colony according to the afore-quoted statistics.

	%	% of Men	% of Women
Peddling	30.	63.6	36.4
Working in factory	26.8	58.	42.
Working in Stores	23.6	93.1	6.9
Sewing (kimonas)	12.5	2.	98
Clerks	4.8	88.1	11.4
Professional	2.3	85.1	14.9

38.1 per cent of the women above fourteen years of age are wage earners. The peddlers make all the way from five to ten dollars per week. This kind of work is decreasing. The women who sew on kimonas get from seven to ten dollars per week. The stores on Atlantic Avenue owned by Syrians are as follows: Restaurant, grocer, restaurant, grocer, shoemaker, haberdasher, tailor, grocer, grocer, restaurant. There are few cases of child labor, perhaps less than a dozen. There are no labor unions. The Syrian as a workman is industrious.

II. Sociological

1. Educational

In discussing the educational part of this subject I must preface my remarks by saying that it is in this field in which America is doing more for the Syrian than in any other thing or in all other things combined. Only eight years ago 45.5% of the children between the ages of six and fourteen were in Public Schools. Now, with the exception of forty students in a day Parochial School, every child is in the Public School. As soon as the children get old enough to work they are taken out and put to earning money, but the officers seem to be ready to see that these particular children get back into school. I found several cases like this. One man had five children. He works fourteen hours per day in a restaurant and gets $30.00

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per month. $15.00 of this goes to pay his rent. He kept his oldest daughter out to work. I asked him about it later. He pulled out a little piece of paper and handed it to me, saying nothing. The paper was a notification from the Truant Officer.

Both in Brooklyn and Manhattan there is a Public Night School which the Syrians attend. This is established by the city for foreigners especially. In Manhattan they have four grades of work and from fifty to sixty Syrians above the age of sixteen attend. In Brooklyn there is one Syrian forty years old who walks nearly a mile every night to his classes after working hard all day. There is a noticeable illiteracy among the women.

Besides the Public Schools there are three other schools. The Maronite (Catholic) Church has a school on Washington Street which forty pupils attend. The Catholic sisters (American) teach the children in English in the mornings and a Syrian, Mr. Nicholas El Hage, teaches in Arabic in the afternoon. I have not yet gotten a very exalted idea of this school. The children are given their books free. They are taught principally the chants and prayers of the Maronite Church. The Arabic teacher is not what we would call a modern instructor. One of the ladies said she did not send her children to him because, as she said, "He beats the divil out of the children."

The second Church School is in Brooklyn. It is held in the basement of the Greek Orthodox Church. The teaching is done entirely by a Syrian priest. The school is held from four until six after the children complete their work at the public schools. It has about twenty five students. I take it that this scheme which the Church is inaugurating is not meeting hearty approval, for there are over a thousand children which belong to the Greek Orthodox Church, yet only twenty five pupils in this School. He teaches them mainly the Church creed. I asked him if his students did not get very tired after working hard all day in the public school. He replied, "No, the Syrians don't get tired that way as quickly as Americans." His cousin, a little girl of about eleven, spoke up, "I do, I get awfully tired staying there from four to six."

The third school is a night school which was started scarcely a month ago. It is for the teaching of English and politics. It is managed by the Syrian American Club. The teaching is done by students from Columbia who give their services free. It is not meeting with remarkable success. The principal trouble is irregularity of attendance. The Club furnishes the building with heat and light. There are only fifteen men enrolled at present. There is a burning zeal among all Syrians that their children shall have a good education in the English language. There seems to be

little concern about their learning the native tongue. The attitude toward the English language is that it is the key which unlocks the coffers of American wealth.

2. Recreation and Amusements

Near to the Manhattan Colony is situated the Battery Park. It is used very little by Syrians. There are no play grounds or recreation centers where the children go. There is a settlement on Greenwich Street, but they do absolutely nothing for the Syrians. The Superintendent said she did not know a single Syrian. There are saloons in all the various communities, but none operated by Syrians, and scarcely any patronized by them. Several years ago a Syrian owned two saloons, but he sold them both. Faour Bros. took a saloon on a debt recently but sold it as quickly as possible. Few Syrians patronize the theaters. I heard one fellow say he went sometimes; he is a well educated young man, however. Moving pictures shows are beginning to attract the Syrians. I heard one young lady say she went to the vaudeville shows often to take her little brothers and sisters. There are no dance halls for Syrians. In South Brooklyn the better class people attend dances.

The American amusements do not appeal to the Syrian; he has a far different way of enjoying himself. In business he is willing to rush and hurry around for the sake of the almighty dollar, but he seeks his

amusement in a far different way. He has what he calls the Sahrah . A Sahrah may best be defined as a "sitting party. He goes to his friend's home and sits and sits by the hour. Little is said or done. He comes and goes away again with little notice or excitement by either host or guest. Turkish coffee is always served in little cups, which hold about a tablespoonful, and is generally unsweetened. Sometimes scented drinks are served, that is, a fruit syrup with a highly fragrant odor. Often fruits are brought out on a large tray and set before the guests if they are of enough importance.

From time immemorial this has been the greatest desire of the Syrian. The ancient writer said Solomon's reign was so remarkably successful because "every man could sit under his vine and fig tree." This is not changed nor does life in America seem to affect the custom. Some of my friends were having a tennis match once in Syria. Some peasants from the mountains came past and watched the game. Some one told them that the people who were playing were Americans. "Isn't it a shame that they have to work so hard at that game"? they said. "Haven't they any servants who can do that for them?" The Syrians have a proverb which best illustrates their attitude towards the ordinary American game. "Haste is from the devil, slow going is from the merciful one." To run after a baseball would be un-

dignified. It will take a long time before this idea of the Sahrah will be changed. As I said, there is little conversation at the Sahrah. They generally ask about the health of each of the members of the family several times. They never speak about the weather. Often they tell stories. These are generally told in poetry, that is, in a jingle.

The morality among the Syrians is better than any class of people with whom I ever came in contact. In the remote parts of Syria a person guilty of adultery is taken out to the edge of the village by the fathers and brothers, who invite all their friends to accompany them, and here the guilty party is stoned to death. I have learned of nothing among the Syrians of New York which has led me to change my opinion of their moral standards. There are many unmarried men in New York who have no places to go where they may spend their leisure time. These generally go to the restaurants and play a game called Taulie. There are ten Syrian restaurants in Manhattan. These are practically the only recreation centers for them.

3. Fraternal and Benevolent Societies.

I have three Syrian clubs to report. The first, The United Syrian Society meets in Brooklyn. I cannot tell the exact purpose of this society. The new president in making his inaugural speech on January 1st said, "We are often asked, 'What is the purpose of this society?' This is

a hint that it has no definite purpose. Our purpose is to help the Syrians. We do not know how we will do this until we see the needs." At their meetings they often discuss politics of the homeland. They gave an Arabic play last year. I have not heard that it proved to be a remarkable success.

The Syrian American Club is a more flourishing organization. It has a very definite purpose which is to induce its members to become citizens of the United States. It has about a hundred members and fifty of these are naturalized citizens. Only citizens can be active members. The meetings are held twice a month in their own hired rooms at 90 Washington Street. This Club best typifies their sentimental American patriotism. In this one room, twenty five by fifty feet, they have eight immense American flags and nine smaller ones covering almost the entire walls. Large framed pictures of Washington, Lincoln and Roosevelt adorn the walls. At the time of the election of Mr. Hughes to the Governorship of New York State and when Mr. Taft was nominated and elected, they sent telegrams of congratulation. These distinguished gentlemen replied to the telegrams by letter. These three letters are framed in beautiful frames and hang at the very front of the room. Not only are the letters showing the signature of Judge Hughes and President Taft displayed, but the envelopes in which these letters were sent are also framed. One member told me that he was well acquainted with Secretary Knox and all those men down in Washington.

I found that he had been on a committee to go to Washington on some business in respect to the Syrians and had been granted an interview with our Secretary of State.

The third club which I have studied among the Syrians is one which would not be tolerated in the homeland. It is composed of women. I consider it one of the best indications of American influence upon the Syrian women. They call it the Syrian Ladies Aid Society. It is composed of women of all religions, a thing impossible in Syria. The aim of the club, in the words of their President, Mrs. Halaby, is "to help the poor and helpless Syrians." They visit the poor, take clothes to the needy, visit the new comers and help discouraged emigrants back to the homeland. They have forty members, composed mostly of ladies who have been in America about ten years or more. They gave a play last year in Arabic which netted them $700. Their meetings are held the first and fifteenth of each month. I quote a letter written by them to Commissioner Williams recently, which shows what they have accomplished.

Honorable William Williams,
Commissioner of Education,
Ellis Island, New York.

Dear Sir:-

The Syrian Ladies' Aid Society has been organized since 1907, having raised $3,409.96 and disbursed $1975.63 in charity among the Syrian people, sending 72 to the hospital, putting 79 children in school and paying the expenses of 85 who had not succeeded in this country or who were ill back in their homes. Every way in our

power we have endeavored to assist our people.

At present we have about $2000.00 in the treasury and will probably raise $1000.00 more this year. Our wish is to establish a Home for Syrian People. We find that we can secure a house at No. 365 Henry Street Brooklyn, near the ferry, which we feel we can maintain if you will allow us to have a representative on Ellis Island and release to us any Syrians who fail to meet their friends, or are detained for any reason.

We had a representative on the Island in 1907-08, and you said when we were in a position to maintain a Home, you would give us this privilege again.

Hoping you will grant our request, we are,

Yours respectfully,

SYRIAN LADIES' AID SOCIETY

per Pres.
Treas.
Sec'y.

4. Politics and Government

Most of the Syrians are Republicans. They say it is better for their business to belong to this party. There are no socialists among them. Politics interests them little.

5. Criminality

I have never yet heard of a Syrian being locked up for disorderly conduct. A policeman who has been on the beat in Brooklyn where most of the Syrians live said,



"In all my time here I have never locked up a Syrian. I have seen two fights among them. I have never seen one of them drunk. Reports come to us from outside sources that they gamble over there in the restaurants but we can't find any trace of it." The policeman who has been on Washington Street near the Battery for three years told me, "I have never locked up one Syrian. I have seen four drunks. They were taken care of by their friends. I have never seen them gamble. In 1905-06 they had a big religious fight in which two of them were killed, but that's past now." One man who has lived down among them said, "I have lived here for twenty-two years and have never seen one drunken Syrian."

III. RELIGIOUS

1. A Study of all Churches reaching Syrians.

The four denominations among the Syrians in New York are as follows: the Protestants have 120 members, the Maronites 700, the Greek Catholics 1100, the Greek Orthodox 3000. The last preacher the Protestants had, they discharged because he did not believe in the Virgin Birth and other similar theological beliefs. For a year past till recently they have been without a preacher. Now they have a young man, Mr. Yusuph Zeidan, who is quite successful. The Spencer Memorial Presbyterian Church has given them the use of their building at certain times during the week. They are hoping to get a room of their own soon. The Presbyterian Board of Home Missions is assisting them.

The Y.W.C.A. had arrangements almost completed to establish work among the Syrians, but the plans failed largely because of the rules of the Y.W.C.A. which allows only Protestants to hold office.

2. Attitude to Traditional Faith and Institutions.

Father Francis, the Maronite priest said, in writing to his beatitude Elias Peter Hoyeck in Antioch, "The multiplicity of temporal affairs here in America, which exhaust both soul and body, lead to religious indifference. Happy he who remembers that he has a soul to save and that this is not the end of man. Our Syrians may protest that they came to America to make fortunes and not to be religious, still a number of them cast by poverty upon a strange soil preserve intact their Christian faith and remember the obligations of a Christian life." Father Abraham Beshwate writes as follows, under date of January 23rd last year: "I must say that on the whole they are less religious and less regular in attendance than they were in Syria and this is no doubt due to what is commonly known as the fever which all foreigners seem to be infected with as soon as they land here- the worship of the American dollar."

F. THE SOCIAL MIND AS EXPRESSED IN THEIR NEWSPAPERS

There are fourteen Syrian Newspapers published in this city. The principal ones are "Jureb el Kurdy" (twice a week) (The Bag of the Kurd), which means "It holds everything; "Al Hodah" (Daily), The Guide;

Murad el Gharb (three times a week), The Mirror of the West; El Muhazar, the Immigrants; Dabeel (weekly), the guide; As Seham (weekly), the Arrows; Alam Jedid (monthly), The New World. - (See translation from this magazine at the conclusion of paper).

The idea that most Syrians have of New York is that it is a place where there is no religion, or absolutely no responsibility of one person for another. They say, "You Americans are cold and unfriendly." One Syrian in writing home described America thus: "You cannot imagine what a centre of activity this great centre of New York is. May I term it the daily activity of four million strangers and residents. When one beholds the numerous boats that plough the waters, the electric trains that cross the two gigantic bridges; when one raises his dazzled eyes to the banks, docks and stores which are of prodigious height, one is almost drawn into the whirl of affairs against one's will. What must be the dreams of our poor Syrians! "

G. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we find that the Syrian comes here because he finds America a land free from despotism, and a land presenting great opportunities for gaining wealth. The Syrian lives quietly, free from immorality, drunkeness or crime. His house is as clean as that of any immigrant, and in no way is he a hinder-

ance to the community. He is a producer and a trader. With his production of Oriental goods he adds to the wealth of the community. He is anxious to become an American citizen and especially to give his children a good education. He is thoroughly patriotic to all American institutions, more so than the ordinary American born citizen. The older Syrians think New York is cold an inhospitable and wonders why Americans are not more friendly. This attitude is best shown by the poem which recently appeared in one of their monthly magazines which I am adding with its literal translation. The subject of this poem is"New York". In contrast to this attitude of the older Syrians is the spirit of the American-born children,- fond of their adopted land, ashamed of their native tongue, their native religion, and all their old customs. The children are assimilated very rapidly because of the intense desire of their parents that they get a good English education for purposes of business. In his trading the Syrian is dishonest, a quality bred in him by years of environment in the land of "The Despicable Turk". Regardless of his previous tyrannical government he takes no part in any anarchistic political agitation. He is giving up his traditional religious faith. This is caused amongst the adults by his intense greed for money which seizes him as soon as he arrives in this country. The reason amongst the children is different. The native church services here are conducted in the classical Arabic, which no Syrian child understands, there being no opportunity for learning it in this country. (The

spoken and written Arabic are very different). The American-born Syrian presents the principal religious problem for religious organizations.

In comparing the study of the three colonies we find a remarkable change comes over the Syrian after he lives in this country a few years. In Manhattan where the immigrants live for from two to five years the standard of living is poor,- practically the same as in Syria with the housing conditions worse. People who fail when they first come here,in business or in health return to their native land. These are the ones who give the wrong impression as to the effects of life in New York upon the Immigrant. After staying in Manhattan for five years or less he generally moves to the South Ferry community in Brooklyn. The conditions there are much better than in Manhattan. The houses are larger. The peddling decreases. Many begin to own their own stores or factories. The higher standard of living shows the degree in which they have been assimilated by American customs. In South Brooklyn where those live who have been in Greater New York approximately ten years the houses are as large and as well furnished as the houses of Americans in that vicinity, and their standard of living is as high. They are the officers in the various clubs,which best represent their reaction to their new environments. Visiting them in this community, seeing their high standard of living, their social life, their Americanized organizations, their business prosperity,one can come to but one conclusion, viz. The effect of America on the Syrian immigrant is helpful.

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NEW YORK

(A translation from the original)

The daughter of the disobeying Old World
    and the bride of the great New World,
And the mother of anarchy of both
        Woe to your sons and lovers.

The divorce of the Indians in the past,
    The sweetheart of the Jews today,
And the carrier of the banners of revolution tomorrow
        Woe to your sons and lovers.

The fields are your birthplace
    but filled with your boa constrictors
The mines are your cradle
    but filled with their poison.
The mountains of richness are your throne,
    but surrounded by their wild animals
        Woe to your sons and lovers.

Your bowels are of iron but impregnant
    Your breasts are of wood but the moth undermines it
Your mouth is of copper, but 'tis oxodized
    Your forehead is of marble and beautiful but motionles
        Woe to your sons and daughters.

Your drink is silver and your food is gold
    Your dress is the most valuable of silk and
        the rarest of jewels.
Your sandals are the wings of knowledge
    But your heart is of tar set on fire.
        Woe to your sons and lovers.

The daughter of colors and lights
    Your hair is auburn in the night;but dark in the day
You dye it for every lover, and wash it for every
    disinterested
    Daughter of whispers and cries
But not a tune of yours like that of the morning,
    or the dawn of the day
In your voice is the tune of bright gold,
    Whether in your theatres or streets
In your banks or churches
    Woe to your sons and lovers.

The daughter of richness and monopoly
    In your stores are the productions of the world
In your safes the immense heaps of money and jewels
    In your castles the wonders of civilization
And in your dark cottages- poverty, hunger and sighs
    Woe to your sons and daughters.

In the wires of your heart and messages of love and hypocrisy
In your veins the flow of commerce and greediness,
In your muscles the thrill of the evil pleasures
In your saliva is the lust of the martyrs of your love
Woe to your sons and lovers.

Oh, stop the queen of metals and electricity
Oh, stop the queen of business and of richness.
Your beauty is from this world and not from above
Your beauty is like a light inside a glass, which disappears by breaking it.
Your beauty is in your castles and not in your cottages,
In your pleasures and not in your charities
Your beauty fills the sky with light and your soul with darkness;
A high tree with large broad leaves but withered flowers
This is your beauty.

A river of electricity, with mountains of marble on either side and woods of iron around-
This is your beauty.

A dark night with twinkling stars,
Made by the destructible art of man
And not by the indestructible art of God.
This your beauty

An hour commencing with pleasure and ending with madness
Woe to your beauty

Your breast of beauty is a field with lust and greediness,
Falsehood and hypocrisy, the last inventions of a fake civilization is the eye of your beauty.
Woe to this beauty.

Highness and immensity in the womb of commerce, called greatness and splendor by your merchants, and this is your beauty.
But woe to them and thee because they are liars.
The beauty of their idols like a dollar, minted in the night and gilded in the day
Woe to this beauty.

Oh the bride of the new world,
Whose bride are you today ?
And the bride of whom will you be tomorrow?
From the cottages of the Indians to the hordes of the Jews to the hands of the devil-
From the cottages of Liberty to the Lofts of Lust
To the castles of richness
To the chasm of revolution and woe and destruction-
This is your course.

May God bless souls knew you innocent, and woe to
souls know you impure.
Oh, New York! New York!
You are envied today by Jerusalem.
Oh, New York! you are filled by Hebrews
Going about joyfully and not moaning
Woe to your sons and daughters.

Is it in your papers or in your commerce,
In your pulpits or your theatres,
Will be heard the voice of Israel, the voice of your
true sons?
Will Thamar fill your streets with vice, and your
theatres with adultery by night?

Does Jael hold the pen today, as she held the sword
in the past ?
But a great difference between one enemy and another
Between injustice, which is the Sisera of the past
And justice which is the Sisera of today.

The daughters of Jews and devils
Where are the virtues of your ancestors?
Your past is light and fire
But your present is an artificial light,
And your future- ! ! !

It is certain that there will come a time
When the artificial decays, and the beauty of the face
disappears.
Your beauty is a curse magnified by God.
In your skyscrapers underneath His Heavens
Your gilded domes made by God from gold, filled with
the best perfumes, and decorated by crowns;
But they are boils of the earth and souls living underneath
them are boils of life.

Your towers would be soon in your tombs
Your false glory buried under your rivers
And Ninevah and Babylon will bemoan you.

(In Arabic this poem is beautifully written.

I have given a very literal translation.)

Jan. 13,1911. Ralph A. Felton.

Examples of the

Eight

Kinds of ~~Rational~~

SOCIETY.

for
Dr. Tenney.

Sociology ~~287~~. 151

Ralph A.Felton.

Sympathetic Society.

Many villages in the Lebanon Mountains are composed of one large family. For instance the village of Abeih is composed of people whose name is Haddad which is the name in Arabic for Smith. They all work together, some caring for the threshing floor, some attending the vineyards, while others care for the sheep and goats on the side of the mountain.

Unfortunately most villages have two families instead of one. Sooner or later this generates a spirit of hatred. I was in Schweir last spring (1909) when a boy was accidentally shot. The guilty person was easily caught and put in prison. Immediately the people began to speculate what would eventually be done with the guilty man. On the following day it was learned that the man who shot the boy was of the same family as the Mudir (mayor) of the village. Speculations as to the outcome of the prisoner ceased. In a few days the man was released from prison although if he had not have been of the family of the Mudir he would have been sent to prison for at least fifteen years. There is such a kindred spirit for members of the large family that any wrong they may do is always shielded by the rest. I saw the boy when he fell. The man simply pulled out his gun and shot without looking because he was pleased with something.

The village of Bhamdoun is composed of the Khairallah family and the Tabit family. There are about four thousand people in all. In the summer of 1908 while I was up in a little village near Bhamdoun there occured a great excitement. A woman went into a meat market kept by a Tabit to buy a piece of meat. The man asked her sixteen piastres(about 52¢). While she was looking the bargain over, a Mr. Khairallah in a meat market next door yelled to her,"I have a piece here the same size which I will sell you for fifteen piastres". She went in and bought from Khairallah. After she had gone the two butchers "had it out". They cursed, not one another but, one another's families. When various members of the two familes heard their names being cursed they joined in the strife. Soon the cursing turned to fighting. Every man and boy joined in while the women stood on the house tops asking Allah to curse the the other family and their ancestors etc. Many were badly injured. I had some very good friends amongst the Khairallah family. They told me that ten of their number were badly wounded while two were killed.

They nearly always marry in their own family, generally first or second cousins. It is their own large family that is present at a wedding, or funeral. Any adult member of the large family of two or three thousand has perfect freedom about punishing the children of others. This sometimes makes it a little difficult for the children. I saw a woman in Safita(a village north of Tripoli) go to a woman in church and snatch the woman's baby out of her hand because she thought the Mother was not taking care of it promptly. She had quite a little fight getting the child loose from its Mother.

Observed while in Syria
from Sept. 24, 1907 till July 5, 1909.

Ralph A. Felton

Ralph A. Felton.

Congenial Society.

The American Colony at Jerusalem.

I visited the American Colony at Jerusalem three times. It is composed of one hundred and twenty people (August 1909) who are living together in apparently perfect harmony. Mrs. Spafford is the religious head of the Colony and all the members have complete faith in her and are in sympathy with her beliefs. She came with her husband about twenty years ago from Chicago to Jerusalem with the purpose of preparing as she said "a bride ready for the coming of the Lamb". She believed and still holds the belief that Christ is soon to appear on the world in bodily form and that he will come to Jerusalem. She is looking for him daily. Soon MR. Spafford died but she was so possed with the idea of her coming Lord that she staid in Jerusalem, gathering friends around her who had the same belief. Soon the Colony grew too fast to be supported by her meagre income. So they started a store where olive-wood articles are sold to American tourists. This store now is the largest in Jerusalem in this line. They are now carrying an immense stock of all Palistinian curios.

The present members of the colony are composed of several European nationalities, chiefly Sweedes, a few Syrians, and about half are Americans.

The rules of the Colony are very strict in many things. The members are not allowed to marry. This rule has been suspended three times(two of these instances were for the marriage of two of Mrs. Spafford's daughters). None of the members receive any wages, though all work steadily. About a dozen of the ladies work in the kitchen. They sell cakes etc. to all the Foreign residents of Jerusalem. Some of the younger girls gather flowers in the country around Jerusalem. These flowers are sold in little booklets to tourists. Three of the young men work in the studio. Pictures of the Holy Land are taken and printed in large numbers. Although it might seem that these commercial pursuits are for mercenary reasons yet I am convinced that the original religious purpose is still the dominating desire of most of the members.

Mrs. Spafford spends much of her time in communion with God. She gets what she calls revelations. (They come less often than in former times). Prayer is one of the features of the Colony, having stated times when they meet for this purpose. There are no frivolities seen around the place(I have seen one notable exception to this). After four o'clock the people spend a couple of hours in recreation, generally tennis, when Tea is served.

The young men have a band organised and practice twice each week. Frequently the evenings are spent in singing hymns. Many acts of charity can be attributed to the members of this colony such as caring for orphans etc. Strangers are always invited to the place and no charge is ever made for entertainment though the guests stay a week or more. They are trying to have a people truly prepared for the advent of the Lord.

vation made from 8 weeks in Jerusalem. Ralph A. Felton.

Ralph A. Felton.



Approbational Society.

Two hundred students come each year from Egypt to the Syrian Protestant College at Beirut, Syria. These are mostly natives of the valley of the Nile though some come from away up in the Soudan and three come from as far as Abyssinia. Out of the nine or ten hundred students in the College consisting of thirteen principal nationalities besides many from other smaller countries, these students are the least desirable.

This being the case the College Faculty admits them on probation . Occasionally they are sent home after two or three weeks stay in the College. The reasons for disqualification are: first,moral character;that is, exerting a bad influence on the student body , and secondly their ability to learn. The Faculty has now come upon a new system of probation. Instead of allowing these students to take the sea voyage to Beirut and then be sent home, one of the members of the Faculty is sent down to Egypt to spend a considerable time each summer. While here he "weeds out" the applicants. This is done by seeing them in their homes and by personal recommendations by the students'friends.

If during the school year a student proves to be unfit for membership in the College he is either put on the "black list" or the"grey list". The latter means that he can come back again to the College for one more trial only and if his conduct is the same as before he will be sent home. The "black list " means that he cannot return at all. This system applies to all students although it is generally used only with the students from Egypt.

One student escaped the notice of the teacher in charge and hid himself in the ship when the other students were coming up. Generally two of the coasting steamers are used for bringing the students up. This "stow-away" was quickly sent home of course. Generally when a student is put on the "black list" his friends and innumerable relatives begin a system of indescribable impunity to persuade the College authorities to change their decree. I am sorry to say that upon several occasions the Faculty(American) has been influenced by these beseeching requests and has permitted students to once more register as students,who undoubtedly were unfit.

Ralph A. Felton

Instructor in the College-1907-1910.

Ralph A. Felton.

Despotic Society.

TURKEY.

A teacher in the same College in which I have been for three years was down in the harbor at Beirut one evening during the summer of 1908. While on the deck of a ship he noticed a a young man weeping. Thinking he might console him or help him he ~~asked~~ said "May God give you peace this evening! I pray to God that you are not troubled?"

"Yaseedi(Your honor) said the young man,"the worst has befallen me". Then the teacher sympathized with him and finally the young man told him this story:(which illustrates a despotic society -TURKEY) "Beforetime Allah was merciful to us. My dear father had a fine position in the Government - But Yaseedi, my father was a just man! They could not put up with his honesty at Stamboul(Constantinople). One evening my mother seemed worried because my father had not come home. 'Never mind, he has probably been sent off by the Sultan on a long errand' any way never mind, 'As God Wills', I told her, but it was only to hide my own worry, for I feared something had happened which should blacken the name of our family. A week went by, Yaseedi. I went to the Palace and asked about my father but no one could tell me. Finally one man came and said, Khwaazee(Mr.) what will you give me if I take you where your father is?' 'On my honor and the honor of my family and in the name of the Prophet Mohammed I will give you a thousand liras(Turkish pounds worth about $4.50 each).' 'Meet me on the Bosphorus tonight at midnight beyond the bridge and I will show you your father, but if you breathe one word, your head will be gone.' I met him at midnight. He had a boat. He rowed me quietly along the banks of the Bosphorus keeping in the shadows of the trees until we were up behond the drive. Then he stopped in the middle of the stait, and began to get out a rubber suit of some kind. Believe me Yaseedi, but it was the darkest night in my life. He went down into the water. But I said I can stand it no longer,we will go back, you shall have the money without showing me my father. But he went down anyway and urged me to go. He said,' You will see men down there as thick as trees'. Maalim (teacher) you have been so good through the mercy of Allah to ask me, now I have told you why I am so sad".

Dr. Tenney: I fear that you will think this story exaggerated, but I could write similar ones all night. The brother of one of our best native teachers was down in Egypt and while coming home the officials noticed that he had a Myers History with him. He was put in a damp cell in prison and died in two weeks. I have been at his home often and witnessed how his family grieved for him.

In the hospital at Safed the Dr. had an Xray machine sent to him. It was stopped in the port because they thot it was a machine for some conspiracy. I had trouble myself in the port because some shells for a gun,which I had safely in my pocket,had accidentally fallen in my trunk. Five members of a little village were put in prison on the charge of treason, when they met one night to consider establishing a reading room in their village. A friend of mine a Mr.Freyer was getting a gasoline engine in to run a printing press. It was confiscated be-cause on the wheel it said "so many revolutions per minute". etc.

Observed 1907-1910

Ralph A. Felton.

Ralph A. Felton.

Authoritative Society.

During the latter part of September last year (1909) I took a trip with the Japanese Officers of the South Manchurian Railroad. We went from Mukden down to the Yalo river which is the boundary line between Manchuria and Korea. The one thing which impressed me continually in my conversation with them was the deep reverence they had for the Mikado. It was more than intensive patriotism, it was profound reverence and pious fear. Finally I enquired from one of my Japanese friends about the Mikado and why they held him in such high esteem.

The Japanese gave me this answer:

"In the first place Japan was especially made by the Creator. After he had made all the rest of the world he stopped in the Pacific Ocean and made Japan as his Masterpiece. We first had the Age of the gods. There were three dynasties of the gods. Then one of the gods came to earth in the form of a man. His name was Jimmū Tennō. Now he was the founder of the present dynasty of Emperors. He came from heaven 2570 years ago. I think the story about Japan being especially created is a legend, but the beginning of the Mikados is correct. We have that in our histories."

On the second of October I was present at a ceremony in a Shintu Temple in Kioto. I was unable to get very exact data concerning this service but was told that the parents were dedicating their boy baby to the service of the Emperor.

(This authoritative belief in the Mikado of Japan has been the most prominent influence in Japanese success in war, since every Japanese soldier is proud to die for the Emperor in battle. It is here that the great difference between China and Japan lies. The Chinese put all authority in the head of the family and reverence them. Consequently every Chinaman conscientiously cheats the Government officials and patriotism is nil and revolution is always present somewhere in the Empire. Last month a new revolution broke out, one entire mission station was destroyed.)

Ralph A. Felton

Ralph A. Felton.

Conspirital Society.

(An extract from a letter written by Mrs. Doughty-Wylie, wife of the British Vice-Consul of Mersine, to her Mother in England.)

"We are having a perfectly hideous time here. Thousands have been murdered _ 25000 in this province, they say; but the number is probably greater for every Christian village is wiped out. ***** After Turks and Armenians had made peace and the Armenians had given up their arms, the Turks came in the night with hose and Kerosene and set fire to what had remained of the Armenian quarter. Nearly everyone on the Armenian school perished, anyone trying to escape being shot down by the soldiers.

In the French school a large number of Fathers and Sisters, with 2000 Armenians were rescued by Dick. Thirty, who tried to escape, were shot.

I have the hospital - sixty-five beds so far and about 150 outpatients requiring surgical dressings. Fifteen thousand starving people are to be fed and we are running into debt nicely.

The Turkish authorities do nothing except arrest unoffending Armenians, from whom by torture they extort the most fanciful confessions. Even the wounded are not safe from their injustice. A man was being carried in to me yesterday when he was seized and taken off to gaol. I dare not think what his fate may be.

Nobody is safe. They murder babies in front of their mothers; they half murder men and violate their wives while the husbands are lying there dying in pools of blood. Then they say it is the fault of the Armenians, because there existed a revolutionary society of about sixty members, who talked and wrote a good deal of rot.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

The authorities did nothing, and the soldiers were worse than the crowd for they were better armed.

The soldiers set fire to the door. Everybody in the house was roasted alive. It was in that part of the town that Dick was wounded. He was trying to rescue some people lying amongst the burning houses.

*** * * * * * * * * * * * * *

We have fifteen thousand people starving and without shelter. All we can give them is a fragment of bread or a handful of rice. We have nothing more to give. No milk for the babies -nothing. * * * "

(Dick is Major Doughty-Wylie).

We who were in the midst of this massacre im-
mediately surmised that it was brought about
by some unknown conspiracy. After most of
[illegible] christian towns had been destroyed and the mobs quieted
the Gov. of Adana was tried for conspiracy. While the
[illegible]al was being held Sultan Abdul Hamid II was dethron-
[illegible]d. It was then discovered that he had ordered the massacre.

Ralph A. Felton

Ralph A.Felton.

Conspirital Society.

(An Extract from a letter written by Mr. Stephen van R. Trowbridge).

"Kessab was a thrifty Armenian town of about 8 000 inhabitants, situated on the landward slope of Mt. Cassius (Arabic, Jebel Akra),which stands out prominently on the Mediterranean seacoast, halfway between Alexandretta and Latikia. Kessab is now a mass of blackened ruins,the stark walls of the churches and houses rising up out of the ashes and charred timbers heaped on every side. There were nine Christian villages which clustered about Kessab in the valleys below. Several of these have been completely destroyed by fire. All have been plundered and the helpless people driven out or slain.

On Thursday, April 22, serious alarm reached the people of Kessab. It was know that a Massacre of the Armenians had taken place in Antioch, 36 miles to the North, and that attacks were being planned on the Christian villages of the mountains. A parley was arranged with the Mudir (magistrate) of Ordou, the nearest seat of Government, and a telegram asking for military protection was dispatched to the Governor of Aleppo. The Mudir, wjose name is Hassein Hassan Agha, met the Kessab delegation halfway down the mountainside and assured them that he had already scattered the mobs that had gathered with evil intention. But his pledges soon proved to be idle tales, because that very Thursday evening he permitted crows of armed Moslems to come into Ordou from Jissr Shoughr , Kusayr, Antioch, and even from Idlib, far to the East. Early the next morning,after entertaining the raiders, he sent them on their way to sack Kessab.

Thursday evening the Kessab scouts brought word into the town that great crowds of armed Turks and Arabs had gathered in the nearest Moslem village. It was an anxious night. Before daylight Friday morning rifle shots told of the enemy's advance. By three separate mountain trails thousands of armed Moslems came pouring into the valley. Their Martini rifles sent the bullets whizzing into the Christians houses. It was a desperate struggle. For five hours the fusillade continued with fierce determination. The women and girls gathered up the little children on their backs and in their arms, hastened along the west trail over the ridge towardKaladouran, and clambered up into the cliffs and crevices. Toward evening the men had been compelled by the overwhelming odds to give up the defense. The Turks and Arabs rushed into the streets of the town and plundered the homes of all the Christians. Only 153 Armenians were killed in all the days fray. ** * * * * * * * * * * * * "

Mr. Trowbridge is a teacher in the school at Aintab not far from where I was teaching. Major and Mrs. Doughty-Wylie were at Mersine but went immediately to the rescue of the Christians at Adana

These are personal letters. I have no book on this massacre. I have copies of several letters similar to these.

Ralph A. Felton.

Contractural Society.

The Arabs.

I spent most of the month of July in 1909 in the central part of Arabia. During this time I became well acquainted with several of the nomadic Arab tribes. This little incident which happened on July 28,1909 illustrates the contractural society there.

We had been sitting around in the tent of the Hwaitat tribe enjoying their hospitality. They asked us many questions and told us many stories. I will quote them as I copied them at the time in my diary.

"By the Prophet, but where can you be going?" they asked.

"To our destination far beyond here and beyond the herds of the Suhher tribe".

"Why have you Foreign Consuls come to this barren country of ours?"

"We want to see your lands and your herds and your flocks".

"I think" said one old Arab, "they are escaping from prison, have you killed someone or done something against the Sultan of America?"

We assured them we were guiltless.

"Then you must be buying camels,"said another.

Finally they told us about the Suhher tribe.

"Perhaps the dogs have killed our servants and taken our camels", said one . (Dogs here refers to the Suhher tribe).

"It is an unwritten law between us that enemies never touch the servants of others, but these Suhher hounds! May Allah curse them".

Then we asked them to tell us this law.

"Five days ago we sent our servants --""-- "Tell them all of the trouble they are Foreigners, they know nothing about fighting" said one old Arab.

"By the Prophet, a year ago the cursed dogs fell on us at night. They took fifty two of our camels and made away. Our children gathered together(the members of the tribe are called children)and we followed them. We captured our camels and killed several of their tribe. For a year all was quiet amongst our black tents. Finally these cursed dogs quietly fell on our friends by an eternal contract, the tribe of Sheik Khalil. We asked them which way the enemy had gone. We found them, captured all the booty and much more and killed several of their children. Five days ago we sent back the prisoners with our servants. We have a law amongst all the Beni(tribes) that prisoners are given five days rations and are sent home on our own camels. We kept their camels. Thank Allah, we have them."

"How long are you going to be sworn enemies of Beni Suhher?" we asked.

"As long as one of them is left or as Allah gives us breath".

"How long have you been enemies with them?" we asked.

"Since the days of Ishmael, May Allah bless his holy memory".

"But you with your foreign guns could fight well. Could we make an agreement with you before the Prophet that we will give you our horses, the best in the desert, and you can take your foreign guns and fight for us and live with us and be friends of Beni Khalil and enemies to Beni Suhher, cursed may they be".

"It would be a great pleasure" we said " to live under your honorable tents but we must hasten to our destination". etc.

Ralph A. Felton.

Ralph A. Felton.

Idealistic Society.

Isaiah 35.

"The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as a rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of Jehovah, the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God;he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out,and streams in the desert. And the glowing sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the habitation of jackals, where they lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there and a way, and it shall be called 'The Way of Holiness"; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for the redeemed; the wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon; they shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of Jehovah shall return and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away".

(Every organization that I looked up that was started with the purpose of being an "Ideal Society" has died a natural death, because the people were not ready for such an organization. However I believe it is coming, not in exactly the same way as the Prophet described above but when the Churches get more education into their religion and the schools get more religion into their education and people stop trying to take the world to Christ but instead take Christ to the world.)

Ralph A. Felton.

Ralph A. Felton.

My dear Dr. Tenney:-

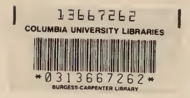
Mr. McCorkle told me this evening that this work illustrating the various kinds of society was to be composed of cuttings from newspapers. I had my work ~~all~~ nearly completed when I received this news. Unfortunately I was not in the class when you announced this request. I shall be glad to make another list for you from newspapers if these are not satisfactory. Will you kindly let me know if you want a new list.

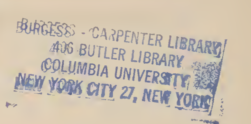
Very respectfully yours,

Ralph A. Felton.

#600 West 122nd. Street.

Jan. 13, 1911.


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